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ABSTRACT

The document is part of a series that reports the findings and accomplishments of the Models for Career Education in Iowa project which was initiated to research, define, and describe an emerging concept of career education and to suggest possible approaches for implementatio in primary and secondary education. One of the basic components in the career development model used as the basis for the project is the learner.s self-concept which is influenced by the roles of significant others (parents, teachers, and peers) and society. How the student acquires knowledge and the environment under which this knowledge is gained are also important aspects in both self-concept and career development. Program objectives are outlined for the primary, intermediate, junior high school, and high school levels geared to the awareness, accommodation, exploration, and preparation-exploration phases respectively. The importance of self-concept is discussed in relation to these phases. A list of 29 generalizations about how an understanding of self-concept is acquired is given. A selected bibliography is included. (Author/EC)

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Models for Career Education in Iowa

THE SELF-CONCEPT AND CAREER EDUCATION

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Models for Career Education in Iowa

THE SELF-CONCEPT AND CAREER EDUCATION

CONDUCTED UNDER RESEARCH AND EXEMPLARY GRANTS
from Career Education Division
Department of Public Instruction
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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PREFACE

Career Education - Is it good for kids? -- That's a question that has prompted many of us to search for a greater understanding of the concept and to reassess the types of experiences our educational programs provide. This search is resulting in a growing commitment to assure curriculum objectives and activities that provide career education experiences for all students.

An exemplary project, Models for Career Education in Iowa, was initiated in 1971 thru the Iowa Department of Public Instruction. The purpose of the effort was to research, define and describe an emerging concept of career education and to suggest possible approaches for implementation in grades K-8. In 1972 the project was expanded to include the curriculum of high school students.

The project is sponsored by the Iowa Department of Public Instruction in cooperation with Iowa State University and nine local school districts. The project staff under the direction of Dr. Alan Kahler, Iowa State University, is working with the following local schools: Shenandoah, Humboldt, Davenport, Marshalltown, Carroll, Sheldon, Osceola, South Winneshiek and Springville Community School Districts. The third party evaluation is being provided by the Iowa Center for Research in School Administration under the leadership of Dr. Ralph Van Dusseldorp and Dr. Walter Foley.

A series of workshops were conducted involving participating school staff and outside resource persons with various backgrounds and expertise. These workshops have provided a multi-discipline approach in establishing understanding and agreement of a set of basic objectives of career education. During the summer of 1973, staff from each of the nine districts participated in workshops to prepare first draft curriculum materials for use in the respective school settings during the 1973-1974 school year.

The publications which follow were developed as part of the responsibility of project participants and staff to provide visibility to the findings and accomplishments of the project. These guidelines and instructional materials are provided at this time to assist local school personnel interested in initiating programs, services, and activities for their students.

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The concepts presented in this monograph play an important part in the exemplary project, "Models for Career Education in Iowa." Appreciation is expressed for the efforts of personnel in the nine local schools who implemented these concepts in the classroom and for the support of project staff in the development of this monograph, which was written by

Bruce E. Hopkins
Project Coordinator

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The Self-concept and the Education Process

One of the basic components in the career development model used as the basis for the project entitled, "Models for Career Education in Iowa," is the learner's self-concept. While the term is defined with different emphasis by different authorities, they all view the self-concept as comprised of both the individual's self-perception and the way in which the individual is perceived by others. The self includes all the attitudes, values, beliefs and distinctive abilities affecting the individual. A person's self-concept can be either positive or negative. As William Glasser, author of Schools Without Failure, has often pointed out, "an individual does not have the option of having no identity. Depending on his background, experiences and view of the future, an individual will develop a self-concept which is either positive or negative."

The self-concept of the individual is of extreme importance to the educator for a number of reasons. Any interaction that a child has with significant others (people who are important to him/her), affects the child's self-concept. The teacher affects the child's self-concept whether or not this is the teacher's objective. The teacher might very well have defined cognitive learning objectives which the learner is able to master, but may be unaware of the learner's potential for failure. As a result, the teacher does not confront this potential for failure by ignoring the child's self-concept in the daily classroom procedure. Contributing to this condition of student failure is the teacher's own self-concept, a topic which is discussed later in this publication.

Most important to the educator is the way the individual's self-percept is inextricably related to behavior. It is hopeless to attempt to get a child to revise behavior without some modification of self-concept. Before a child can learn to ride a bike, improve interpersonal skills, or learn to read, these things have to be possible within the child's existing frame of reference. Educators have constantly reminded us that the curriculum is comprised of much more than subject matter. In order for the school to be able to deal effectively with the process of aiding the growth of healthy self-concepts in children, it must assure that administrators, teachers, bus drivers, lunchroom managers, and the learners themselves are adequately trained to handle their roles. Students become who and what they are as a result of how they interact with the people around them.

The individual's self-concept is an ever-evolving one. The child brings to school many ideas pertaining to the question "Who am I?" If the child comes from an environment where that individual has been made to feel incompetent, dumb, ugly, or unwanted, the child will probably have a negative self-concept. One of the ways this problem manifests itself is through negative behavioral reactions to given situations. A person with an identity problem might compensate for this feeling by constantly quarreling with and antagonizing his or her peer group and

superiors. This is one way for the child to assure obtaining the recognition which cannot be attained through more traditional techniques.

The child who receives affectionate attention from significant others will have a more positive self-concept. If the child feels liked, is accepted as a person, and is allowed to maintain and develop personal dignity, that child will have a positive self-concept. As a result, this person will have confidence and self-respect which allow for a healthy, happy individual.

These early life experiences are crucial. As a person matures, it becomes more and more difficult to revise one's own self-concept. Individuals who have been starved for love in the earliest moments of their lives have a difficult time either giving or receiving love in later stages of their development. Early childhood experiences in filling one's basic needs, as defined by Maslow--life, safety, security, belongingness, affection, etc.--are directly related to the ability to reach self-actualization. People who have had healthy, sound relationships in their earliest years, with their basic needs satisfied, are more capable of dealing with the thwarting of these needs later in life. Children are dependent on people external to themselves for feedback about their worth as individuals. It is unfortunate, but a reality, that children in determining who they are receive feedback from so many significant others, who in reality may not have established their own self-identity. It is extremely important that these significant others, through their dealings with the child, kindle those types of feelings (safety, security, belongingness, etc.) that will develop within the individual those abilities that permit the child to deal with the thwarting of personal needs in a normal manner.

Significant Others

Role of the Parent

The first years of a child's life are most important in the formation of the individual's self-image. The experiences that a child has with significant others (primarily parents at this point in time) are crucial in early character formation. Basic orientation toward the child's environment begins to emerge in infancy. It is during the development period that the child learns through relationships with the mother and father, either a trusting, secure approach to the child's environment or one which creates insecurity, distrust, frustration and inability to cope with the crises of living.

The development of the individual's self-concept begins with the process in which one begins to differentiate between one's own existence and that of being part of one's mother. The quality of the relationship here transmits the basis on which the child's newfound separateness is based. If the

child finds security in testing the environment and the parents are willing to grant the child this freedom, it is likely that these early experiences will provide an excellent foundation for developing a positive self-concept to face future experiences.

In attempting to provide a secure environment in which the child can grow, unduly protecting the child from experiences that the parent feels will be harmful can do the child a great disservice. Sterling G. Ellsworth, in the article entitled "Building the Child's Self Concept," N.E.A. Journal, 1967, identified three common sources of negative self-concepts in people: overprotection, domination and neglect. Overprotection results from conditions where parents never let a child deal with the consequences of that person's own behavior. The parent who constantly picks up after the child, dials the telephone and changes the T.V. channel for the child, denies the growth-oriented experiences that one should be having in normal self-development. If a child breaks a neighbor's window, it is a good experience for the child to work out a settlement for that action. It should be pointed out that often these situations are approached with corrective action which is punitive or aimed at serving as punishment. Situations which belittle or dehumanize the individual will serve to reinforce a sense of nonworth as opposed to serving as a learning experience.

Overprotection and domination often result from a situation where parents are attempting to be too accommodating. When a parent does something for a child which the child is perfectly capable of doing alone, it implies that the parent feels that the child cannot do it well and is a failure. It is easy, in this case, for the child to develop negative attitudes about personal ability to confront problems. Before entering school, the child may have developed ideas about self which will make it impossible to feel comfortable when interacting in new experiences. These situations could easily become weighted with anxiety and difficult for the learner to face.

Parents who constantly keep tabs on their child are indicating incomplete love. Having the child call home every hour when on a date suggests a distrust on the part of the parents which the child may not see in the parents of other children. This does not imply that a boy or girl should grow up in an environment independent of social constraints. It is possible to delineate parental expectations without humiliating the individual.

Parental neglect can take many forms other than the classical concept of a situation where the parents do not provide for a child's safety and security needs. A problem arises in many families when the parents become so intent on filling their employment responsibilities or social obligations by supporting local community organizations, that they ignore the individual needs of family members. When parents become overly involved in their work, bridge club, their local civic organizations, and constantly leave the children with baby sitters, it creates the impression in the mind of the child that external people are more enjoyable company than the parents' own family.

It is fairly common in our society, which is so upwardly mobile, for parents to place too much stress on the ability of their child to compete with others. This problem is further compounded by the tendency to give rewards, both physical and psychological, to a child who does compete well. One outgrowth of this pressure to compete is stress placed on children to work for good grades in school. When grades received are not in line with those the parents expect, children may be either ignored, ridiculed, or punished. Such situations conjure up a host of problems for boys and girls who need most to be accepted as they are. Parental love and affection should never be tied to external achievements. If a child is having problems in school, what is really needed most is help in solving these problems effectively. The child's self-concept is a complicated thing; it should never be threatened by grades in school, ability to excel in athletic competition, or how good the child has been.

Ruth Strang, professor of education at Columbia University, wrote in her book The Adolescent Views Himself, "the child who feels secure in his parents' love, confident of his own abilities and successful in making and keeping friends is likely to achieve adolescent independence without much emotional storm and stress." The inability of a child to find affection, love, and success from parents or older brothers and sisters can lead to experiences of deprivation and extreme anxiety. It is important for parents to remember that not only does the child often perceive self as perceived by significant others, but that the child also deals with others as he or she has been dealt with. If parents and teachers want children to be warm, open, loving people, they have to provide those experiences that will develop in the child an attitude of affection, love, and success.

The Teacher's Self-concept

In order to be effective in developing a positive self-concept in the learner, a teacher must learn to deal effectively with his or her own self-image. Arthur Combs defined the teacher-learner relationship quite succinctly when he wrote, "Learning to teach is not a question of learning to do something; it is a matter of learning to be something." The word "relationship" is a meaningful one because it denotes a situation in which two or more people come to know each other as human beings.

A teacher can be effective only insofar as the teacher is able to scrutinize his or her inner self. The more realistically people are able to deal with the problems in their own lives the better they can identify the human component of all problems confronting the learner. It is most difficult for any educator or person with authority to recognize the mechanism devised for finding other individuals responsible for one's own mistakes. Before it is possible to help someone else learn to act responsibly, the teacher must accept responsibility for his or her own actions.

It is difficult for teachers to maintain a meaningful relationship with students who are acting out of hostility toward them. If any learning is to take place in this situation, the teacher must abandon hostilities toward the student and help the student identify personal problems and actively solve them. When interpersonal relationships have been influential in the development of a child's self-percept, it is probable that the child will be most effective in adjusting self-concept in a learning environment filled with the teacher's understanding, respect and love for the student.

If teachers are going to be honest, open, and receptive with their students, they should be secure enough in their own identities to share with their students personal situations which could be quite damaging to teachers who have negative self-concepts. In doing so, teachers will be able to strengthen their own self-images and develop confidence in their students. A teacher's healthy self-concept comes from successfully filling personal needs. When teaching is viewed by teachers as a situation in which the individual receives satisfaction, emotional involvement with students, and is able to solve teacher/student problems, it is likely teachers will further enhance their own self-concepts.

A most important aspect of the process of teacher self-concept development is that a positive self-concept is predicated on at least three things: (1) an ability to create meaningful, loving relationships; (2) the ability to recognize that a teacher's best self-interest is not served by being free of problems, but by creating constructs which allow facing and solving them; and (3) the ability to receive positive reinforcements of one's own identities. A good teacher is much more than a purveyor of knowledge. The role of a good teacher demands much intense involvement with students and peers. Teachers who cannot effectively manage their own self-concept are not likely to be very successful in helping students manage their self-concepts.

Peer Assessment and Class Stratification

In outward appearance, public educational institutions in this country are equalitarian. They generally require, by statute, that all children, by a certain age, begin a formal educational experience that cannot be terminated before age 16. One objective of career education is to deal with the formal and informal tracking mechanisms within the institution insofar as they serve as restricting mechanisms on an individual's development.

As has already been pointed out, the child comes to school with a fairly well established self-percept. Parents, playmates, and significant others have provided interactions that have taught the child that he or she is either a worthwhile individual, worthy of love, whose uniqueness is inviolate, or a less than worthy person whose lot is to receive the

scorn and rejection of others. The child must learn to cope with this environment and to interact with it. The person with a failure identity is accustomed to being controlled by external factors and being manipulated. This individual is not in control of his or her own destiny and the expectations for failure from such a person have already been well defined.

A learner's peers form an integral part of the individual's reality at all stages of development, although we recognize that peer influence is greater or lesser depending on chronological age and a person's self-concept at any given time. Davidson and Lang found that the teacher's attitude toward students has a major influence on the student's self-percept. It should not be surprising that research also reveals that disadvantaged children often are perceived negatively by their peers. Peers characterized these students as being dirty, poorly dressed, bad mannered, unpopular, and argumentative (W. L. Warner, Democracy in Jonesville. New York: Harper and Row, and A. B. Hollingshead, Elmstown's Youth. New York: John Wiley and Sons).

It should be pointed out that disadvantaged children who excelled in athletics or other extracurricular activities in school were not stigmatized by their peers and teachers. The career development model presented in the following pages attempts to combat stereotypes which keep individuals from realizing their own potentials. Extracurricular programs, vocational programs, and advanced courses should provide a frame of reference for peer or socioeconomic class evaluations which does not serve to restrict the learner.

When class stratification and its impact on the individual learner are examined, stereotyping of individuals becomes pronounced. Children are often seen as members of a class or group rather than as individuals. This creates many problems for the learner. One such problem is that with their identification as a member of a given group comes a set of expectations of their behavior. These expectations may influence children to carry out inappropriate behavior simply because of the way they have been stereotyped. Another obvious problem is that no individual who is so classified is going to meet all the characteristics normally associated with an individual in any classification system.

This is not intended to be interpreted as a tirade against all tracking mechanisms. Hawks, in an unpublished master's thesis at the University of Tennessee, found that culturally deprived children attending school with children from the same socioeconomic background received more opportunities for developing peer group friendships and were able to assume leadership roles sooner than were children with a similar background attending school in a middle class neighborhood. The challenge before educators, is to provide situations where each individual has the opportunity to succeed and to try new roles, thus not becoming responsible for either creating or reinforcing failure. This will require breaking down many traditional modes of educating the individual and making self-worth the most cherished objective of the educational process. One generalization that appears often in the literature dealing with the self-concept is the idea that

children do not learn that they are to be trusted and loved simply because we tell them they are, but because they are involved in processes which reinforce the fact that they are.

Self-concept education demands of the institution that students learn about social interactions so that they can deal effectively with the process of "making face." If children understand the process by which they become who they are, they will be better able to control their own destinies, as opposed to having destinies insidiously imposed upon them by others.

Status and the Self-concept

A hard role for the educational institution to assume is one which would disregard the static status orientation of our society in favor of one which gives maximum recognition to the learner simply because the learner exists. The professional status of one's parents can easily affect the way the child is treated. Even more insidious is the use of academic achievement and intelligence as a basis for recognition. In the eyes of a child, being moved to a different reading group can be tantamount to being labeled a failure. Giving stars to those students who do well in math may signify achievement and success to them, but what does it infer to the child who does not receive any stars? It's quite possible that the status system through which children pass while in our public schools, if we are not careful, can become a life-long tracking mechanism. These conditions can be combated by creating meaningful human relationships and avoiding stereotypic modes of behavior and learning.

The Self and Society - Synergism

What's good for a large business may not necessarily be good for the country, but what's good for the individual is in most cases good for society. The relationship between the best interest of the individual and that of society is a synergetic one. If we can create a learning environment where creditability and individual expression are valued, social growth and viability in the learner will be assured. The individual who has developed the capacity to love and be loved, and therefore has a healthy self-concept, will be able to cope successfully with the process of living, whatever it may offer. Dejection, humilation, personal degradation make it impossible for a person to function effectively in the social situation. Most people who fail to operate on an acceptable level in society do so because of their inability to initiate meaningful human relationships. The relationship between the self and good interpersonal relationships with others is a positive one. The learner who has developed an identity as being an important, worthwhile, wanted individual will develop the capacities to confront challenging situations, be open about self, learn, and grow.

In talking of the individual's self-concept, one must recognize that people look for confirmation of self-identity not only from their own resources but also from individuals external to themselves. Individuals in every stage of development look to parents, teachers, peers, sons, and daughters for affirmation of their self-worth. It is important if individuals are to continue to grow that they receive love, warmth, affection, and challenges from these sources.

Differentiation - Cognitive and Conative Learning

The dichotomy between a person's self-concept and acquisition of knowledge has, in most instances, been a foregone conclusion in public education. We have found it quite easy to differentiate between cognitive (concrete factual) and conative (affective, emotional) concepts. This labeling system becomes quite unrealistic when discussing student behavior. The learner brings to every learning situation a set of attitudes and values which affect the ability to utilize the material being taught. If the interrelatedness of knowledge, attitudes and values is recognized, managing the individual's self-concept becomes an integral part of any learning situation.

The stress on individualized instruction, humanizing instruction, and career education is aimed at creating an educational process which will help people to become better decision-makers and be better able to meet their own basic needs. The process of learning has, in some instances, deteriorated to one of gaining and retaining knowledge. What is taught needs to be relevant to the world of the learner, or it will not result in behavioral or attitudinal change on the part of the learner. One has not taught until the thinking or actions of the learners have been changed. The process of attaining knowledge without transferal to problems related to the learner's personal needs and those of society cuts out that vital involvement with people through which learning becomes meaningful.

The school may be the only place where an individual is asked to differentiate between one's own previous learning experiences and those learning experiences provided by the institution. During this process, the learner is forced to accept values and attitudes of the institution over one's own values and attitudes. This is one of the most dehumanizing aspects of education. When the educational process reflects reality, life as it is, the learner can no longer differentiate between what goes on "out there" and "in here." Only when teachers, administrators, and other school personnel recognize the uniqueness of each student and accept this uniqueness by developing educational programs around it, can they assist the learner in developing into an individual who is evaluative, adaptive, and flexible to new learning situations.

Teacher-Learner Environment

One generalization that has emerged in these writings is that individuals are affected most by significant people with whom they interact. Significant others have been defined generally as people who are important to the individual. Another more definitional description of these individuals might be those people who are in the position to intensify anxiety or produce security. A very dominant person in this role is the teacher. The teacher-student relationship is important to the learner's self-concept during all stages of child and career development. It is most acute during the awareness phase.

Career education is a concept which demands of the teacher an awareness of how instruction is affecting the child's self-percept. It rejects the notion that the learner-teacher relationship is one where the teacher provides the learner with a body of knowledge from which the learner can make meaningful decisions. Knowledge itself has no implications for the learner. It is how the individual relates to that knowledge, the kind of commitment made, that determines how the individual acts because of having that information. Earlier it was suggested that learners behave in terms of how they perceive themselves. As a result, their ability to relate knowledge to their individual acts cannot take place without taking into consideration their own self-concepts. The involvement between teacher and learner becomes crucial. The teacher must assure that the learning situation is aimed at dealing with the personal implications of the material being taught.

The problem for the educational establishment is to create a process that brings the learners to examine how they feel about themselves in terms of their instructional experiences. It should be differentiated from a situation where every student is expected to react in a stereotypically prescribed manner. The way the student perceives self in his or her educational process provides a strong determinant of behavior throughout the instructional experience.

Clarke Moustakes has identified two major components of any successful learning environment: (1) that the learner does not feel overly threatened and is involved in classroom experiences which illustrate respect for the uniqueness of the individual and respect for the learner's humanity, and (2) that the learner feels free to explore all learning situations in terms of individual interests and potentialities.

The role of the teacher as a facilitator has received much reinforcement in recent months. The teacher in this role is responsible for providing much psychological support for the learner, positive reinforcement of the learner's identity, and opportunities for self-direction. Where the learning environment produces stress accompanied by serious implications for failure, the learner will not be free to confront new learning situations and adjust the self-concept accordingly.

Research indicates that the way a teacher feels about a student is communicated overtly and covertly to the student and affects the student's self-percept. Davidson and Lang found (in "Children's Perceptions of Their Teacher's Feelings Toward Them Related to Self-Perception, School Achievement, and Behavior," Journal of Experimental Education, December, 1960) a high correlation between the way in which students perceived themselves and the way in which they were perceived by their instructor. Experiments have also shown that where teachers attempt to be positive and constructive in their comments to their students, the students developed more positive self-concepts and were more willing to change.

The teacher is in a unique position to attain the kind of involvement with students which will, over a period of time, allow students to fulfill their own basic needs. A major concept of Glasser's "Schools Without Failure Program" is the idea that children who are constantly in trouble in school and unable to adjust suffer from their inability to fill their own basic needs. This program is predicated on the idea that through involvement of the learner with people who love and are concerned for one will come an awareness that the learner is an important individual and therefore will be better able to fulfill the learner's basic needs.

Discipline

New research pertaining to the role that student-teacher interaction play on the creation of discipline problems within the school, "The Discipline Game: Playing Without Losers," written by Alfred Alschuler and John V. Shea, appears in the August/September issue of Learning. This article is an interim report on the findings of a project involving Professor Alfred Alschuler and graduate students at the University of Massachusetts, working with John V. Shea, principal of Van Sickle Junior High School, and his staff in Springfield, Massachusetts. The group from the University of Massachusetts is currently spending two years analyzing the discipline problems within this junior high.

The author's original hypothesis was that many discipline problems within the school emanate from a "struggle for attention." They couched the statement of their assumptions in the following terms:

> We began our search for solutions to the discipline problem with the conviction that the battle for attention is a game, a contest between teachers and students in which each side develops tactics and strategies and tries to win.

One characteristic of this game is what the authors labelled the "milling cycle," a characteristic ritual which signals the start of every class period. Students mill around asking mundane questions, sharpening pencils, and getting a drink while the teacher is attempting to attain

order. The basic rewards accruing to the students in this game are: students get to be part of a team, enjoy beating the system, and get attention from both their peers and their teacher.

Discipline problems will continue to arise in great frequency as long as we identify them as belonging to the students and not as a problem in the relationship between the student and the teacher. If this assumption is true, a change in the basic relationship between the teacher and student must be consummated before the discipline problem can be solved. The basic conclusions reached by Alschuler and Shea were:

1. The discipline problem is not in students or in teachers. It lies in broken relationships. The relationships, in turn, are dysfunctional because of the rules of the system. Thus we must change those rules.

2. Unless the rules are changed, the discipline problem victimizes all parties - students, teachers and administrators.

3. The way we define the problem is a political act that ultimately determines who has the power to do what to whom. If we say the problem is in the students we take action to change or to remove them. But if we see the problem in the relationships determined by the system's rules then collectively (for it can only be done collectively) we take action to change those rules.

The authors observed, and we concur, that there is massive social illiteracy among teachers, students, and administrators. Alschuler and Shea have observed that this group shares "no formal social vocabulary or established methods of analyzing social relations, and there are few ongoing collaborative attempts to transform these rules." When the social requisites for communications are absent, we are imprisoned by untenable institutional relationships.

This process can be changed by making teachers, students, and administrators aware of social relationships in a more humane context. The objective should be, in the words of Alschuler and Shea, to "increase internal self-regulation for both teachers and students, specify mutually desired subject matter, and increase mutual respect and affection." Students and teachers working together can define the rules to the game, the agreed upon learning objectives, the vocabulary, and the process of arriving at mutually acceptable conclusions.

Defining Career Education

The definition and educational objectives of career education being utilized in the "Models for Career Education in Iowa" project have under-

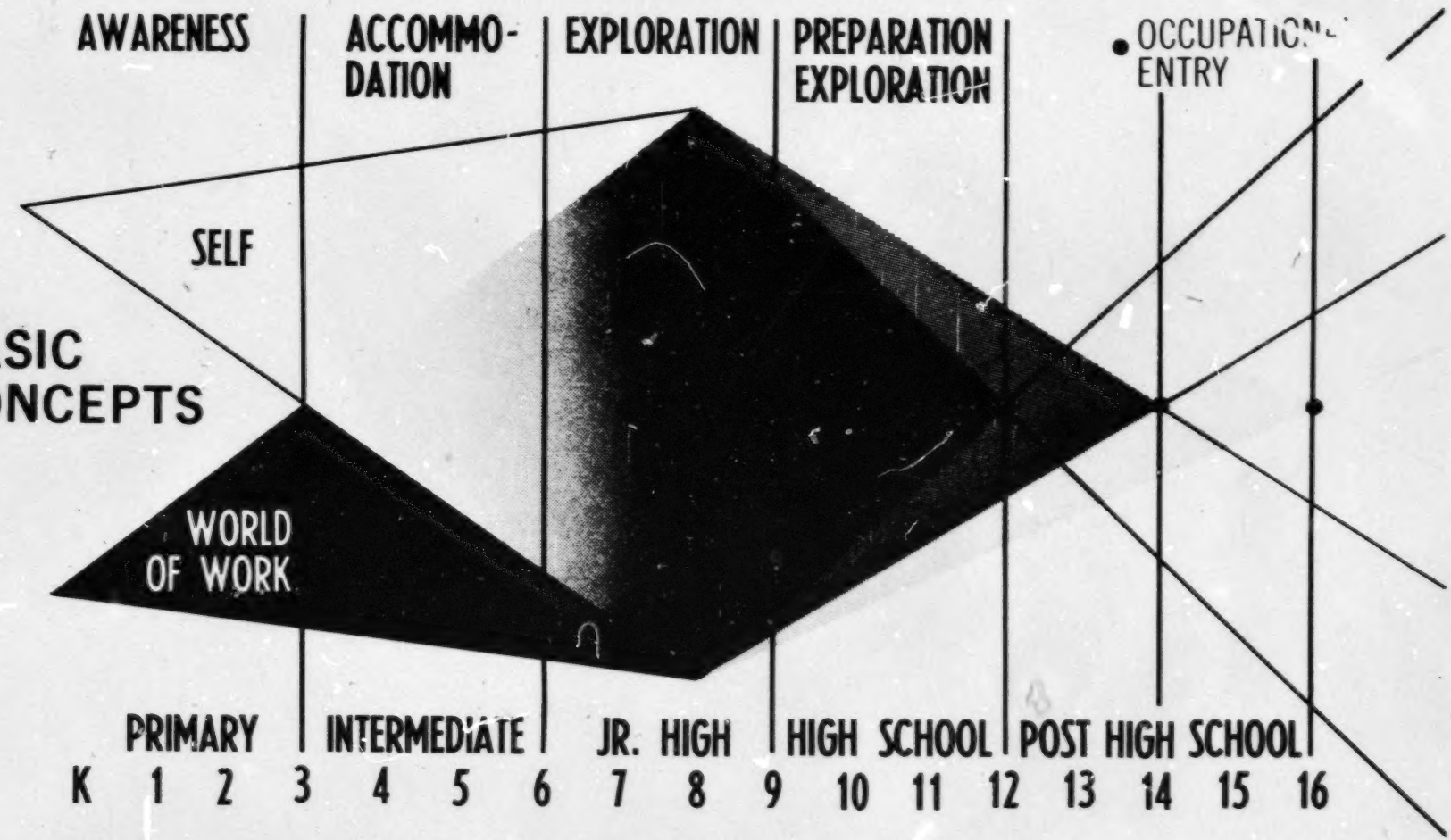
gone many revisions by the teachers from the nine project schools. They are unique for they stress the dual concepts of the world of work and the self-concept as major components of career development. The definition is as follows:

> Career education is a sequence of planned educational activities designed to develop positive student attitudes, values, knowledges, and skills toward self and the world of work that will contribute to personal fulfillment in present and future life opportunities as well as economic independence. Career education, when incorporated into the existing curriculum has as its goal the creation of positive career objectives through the involvement of community resources and educational agencies.

The self-concept objectives for each phase of career development are provided on the pages following the model.

MODEL FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PHASES



Developed as part of Career Education Project, Iowa State University

CAREER EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

Awareness Phase - Primary Level

Program Objective:

During the awareness phase, the learner will become aware of self, physically, socially, emotionally, culturally, and mentally and develop competencies in dealing with others. The learner will develop understandings of and appreciations for work, the value of the worker, and the role of work and the worker in our society.

Self-percept

1.00 The learner will become aware of herself/himself as a person with unique physical, intellectual, emotional and social capabilities.

1.1 Recognizes personal interests.

1.2 Becomes aware of own developing mental and creative abilities.

1.3 Becomes aware of own physical characteristics.

1.4 Acquires short term personal goals.

1.5 Recognizes feelings toward self, peers, adults and near environment.

1.6 Becomes aware of the feelings of peers and adults.

1.7 Recognizes that human beings are more alike than different.

1.8 Recognizes that there are various peer groups with whom one associates.

1.9 Recognizes societal institutions that influence personal attitudes and biases.

1.9.1 Becomes aware of the family as a basic social unit influencing the individual.

1.9.2 Becomes aware of the school and community as influences on the individual.

1.10 Recognizes the importance of the educational setting (home, school, community) to own personal growth.

1.11 Recognizes and performs appropriate behaviors for the school setting.

1.12 Becomes aware of the environment best suited to own learning.

1.13 Becomes aware of decision-making processes.

CAREER EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

Accommodation Phase - Intermediate Level

Program Objectives:

During the accommodation phase, the learner continues to develop self-awareness and awareness of the world of work. The learner also begins to relate or fuse own self-perception with own comprehension of the world of work.

Self-concept

1.00 The learner recognizes interactions with others and increasing knowledge and skills as continually influencing own self concept.

1.1 Analyzes present interests as a basis for development of new interests.

1.2 Recognizes own developing mental and creative abilities in terms of an evolving life style.

1.3 Recognizes physical abilities.

1.4 Becomes aware of future goal possibilities.

1.5 Appraises feelings toward self, peers, adults, and near environment.

1.6 Appraises others' perception of self.

1.6.1 Copes with praise and criticism from adults and peers in a positive manner.

1.7 Recognizes variations in attributes of self, peers and adults

1.8 Relates successfully with various peer groups.

1.9 Investigates the similarities and differences between values in diverse cultures.

1.9.1 Recognizes that all cultures are to be respected.

1.9.2 Recognizes that what is considered acceptable behavior in one culture may be considered antisocial in another.

1.10 Sees that the educational setting (home, school, community) can help one to know own strengths and weaknesses and to develop life skills.

1.11 Recognizes and performs appropriate behavior for the community setting.

1.12 Recognizes personal modes of learning, management, action, operation.

1.13 Acquires experience in making decisions and accepting the consequences of the decisions.

Accommodation Phase

Self and the World of Work

3.00 The learner examines own self-concept in relation to selected occupations.

3.1 Relates personal aptitudes to various related careers.

3.2 Chooses activities which will utilize personal interests and abilities in making contributions to school and community.

3.2.1 Identifies opportunities afforded through school programs.

3.2.2 Identifies opportunities afforded through community activities.

3.2.3 Uses the decision making process in choosing projects commensurate with own abilities and interests.

3.3 Describes the personal growth and rewards of work and/or leisure.

3.3.1 Recognizes that personal satisfactions may come from work.

3.3.2 Distinguishes the need for personal satisfaction in work or leisure to maintain mental and physical well-being.

3.3.3 Describes the satisfactions gained when personal capabilities are effectively used in work and/or leisure.

3.3.4 Expresses the personal value that is received from creative work and/or leisure.

3.3.5 Acknowledges that social recognition may be related to work.

3.3.6 Recognizes that personal satisfaction results from work that is interesting to the individual.

3.3.7 Recognizes that monetary rewards may come from work.

3.4 Relates life to work roles

3.4.1 Describes a life style.

3.4.2 Realizes that monetary rewards affect life styles.

3.4.3 Realizes that work hours affect life styles.

3.4.4 Considers that personal needs affect life styles.

3.4.5 Recognizes that occupations and their resulting life styles may affect physical and mental health.

CAREER EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

Exploration Phase - Junior High Level

Program Objective:

During the exploration phase the learner continues to compare personal characteristics with the knowledge gained from the exploration of careers. The learner begins to identify occupational areas that most closely align with her/his self-concept.

Self-concept

1.00 The learner considers own developing maturity as continually influencing own self-concept.

1.1 Assesses personal interests.

1.2 Assesses developing mental and creative abilities in terms of an evolving life style.

1.3 Analyzes own physical abilities and potentials.

1.4 Acquires some long term personal goals.

1.5 Relates to own emotional characteristics as a function of her/his total being.

1.6 Analyzes others' perception of self.

1.7 Recognizes reasons for variations in personal characteristics of self and classmates.

1.8 Recognizes that peer group relationships may change with evolving maturity.

1.9 Assesses established and changing social roles and norms in relation to self and determines how personal values emerge.

1.10 Identifies educational setting (home, school, community) as a possible aid in developing life skills.

1.11 Evaluates behaviors considered appropriate for the school and community settings.

1.12 Analyzes personal modes of learning, management, action, and operation.

Self and the World of Work

3.00 The learner explores careers, career change and how perceived personal potentials relate to selected careers.

3.1 Recognizes personal characteristics which relate to selected clusters of occupations.

3.2 Formulates tentative career expectations in terms of personal characteristics.

3.2.1 Recognizes that personal characteristics may make a career choice suitable or unsuitable.

3.2.2 Analyzes possible career directions compatible with personal characteristics.

3.2.3 Identifies personal reasons for wanting to change job types.

3.2.4 Describes the importance of personal characteristics in seeking employment.

3.2.5 Distinguishes preparation needed to pursue personal career directions.

3.3 Recognizes that there is continual personal change during career development.

3.3.1 Recognizes that personal characteristics change as the learner matures.

3.3.2 Recognizes that personal characteristics change as the learner experiences the world of work.

3.3.3 Recognizes that change in personal qualifications influences changes in career alternatives.

3.4 Develops an idea of the type of life style desired.

3.4.1 Relates desired life styles to occupational preference.

3.4.2 Realizes that individual may choose a life style.

3.5 Becomes aware of the philosophy of work and leisure as influenced by cultural diversity and diffusion resulting from national migration patterns.

CAREER EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

Exploration and Preparation Phase - High School Level

Program Objective:

During the Exploration and Preparation Phase of Career Development, the learner will attain employable qualities for the world of work, including attitudes, values, and skills to the extent necessary for economic independence and personal fulfillment.

Self-concept

1.00 The learner utilizes personal aspirations, experiences, values, and abilities (to give orientation and direction to own dynamic self-concept).

1.1 Refines personal interests (both awareness and judgement).

1.2 Correlates personal aspirations and life style to own mental and creative abilities.

1.3 Conceptualizes the importance of own physical abilities and potentials.

1.4 Synthesizes and develops plan for achieving personal goals.

1.5 Considers emotional characteristics as a function of own total being.

1.6 Evaluates image of self as perceived by himself and others.

1.7 Recognizes the dignity of all human beings.

1.8 Recognizes that all societies have formal and informal control on human relations.

1.9 Assesses personal values in terms of human needs.

1.10 Recognizes and utilizes the educational setting (home, school and community) as an aid in developing life skills.

1.11 Assesses and manages own behavior in terms of personal value system and societal expectations.

1.12 Effectualizes personal modes of learning, management, actions, and operations.

1.13 Effects decisions and analyzes consequences of those decisions.

1.14 Evaluates personal competencies such as experience, education, and skills.

1.15 Evaluates own abilities, personal qualities, aspirations, and values and their interrelationship to each other.

Preparation and Exploration Phase

Self and the World of Work

3.00 The learner analyzes modifications of career patterns, makes career plans and prepares for entry into the world of work as a function of time and a developing self-identity.

3.1 Analyzes personal characteristics as they relate to areas of interest.

3.2 Explores selected occupational areas in depth and begins preparation for occupational entry into occupational area(s).

3.2.1 Identifies specific educational and skill requirements for occupational entry in selected occupational area(s).

3.2.2 Aligns personal goals and desired life style plans with occupational area(s).

3.2.3 Identifies personal alternatives in terms of current occupational trends.

3.2.4 Evaluates impact of altering occupational objectives to accommodate individual life style preferences.

3.2.5 Realizes that preparation for occupational entry at the secondary level can lead to employment upon high school graduation or lead to more specific preparation for occupational entry at the postsecondary level.

3.2.6 Generates plan for preparing for occupational entry into selected occupational area(s).

3.3 Recognizes that personal characteristics and values change as careers progress.

3.4 Prepares for job entry into selected occupational area(s).

3.4.1 Differentiates between entry level and skilled employment.

3.4.2 Defines logical points of occupational entry.

3.4.3 Identifies educational opportunities available in the school and community that will assist in implementing plan for occupational entry into selected occupational area(s).

3.4.4 Participates in those educational opportunities that will develop desired occupational skills.

3.5 Evaluates personal preferences in types of work and leisure and the balance therein as influenced by demographic, occupational, and preparational level components.

A process and suggestions for integrating the career education objectives into the curriculum are presented in another publication in this series, Implementing Career Education in the School Curriculum. The self-concept portion of the model differs from the world of work in its profound implications for the teacher-learner relationship.

The bibliographic section of this monograph was written as a possible guide for teachers wishing to become informed on working with the student's self-concept. Particular attention should be given to the works of Carkhuff, Glasser, Maslow, Strang, and Fantini. There are many relevent works which do not appear on this list. For example, Fantini is widely published on the concept of building alternative programs into existing curricular formats.

Self-concept in the Awareness Phase of Career Development

The self-concept which a child has developed before entering the educational system often influences the perceptions the child has of school experiences. The learner comes to school with many preconceived ideas of personal identity, and acts in ways which bring about reinforcement of this self-concept. The problem for the child is compounded if he has never known how to receive or give love. This can become a

vicious circle for the learner. E. Heintz, in an article entitled "My Father is Only the Janitor" written for the April, 1954, Phi Delta Kappan, found that pupils from a low socioeconomic class receive grades four points lower for comparable work than their colleagues from a higher socioeconomic class. How can these children, when a part of kindergarten or first grade class, find the type of security which allows them to function satisfactorily in the class?

Glasser, Combs, and Maslow have all written of the need for meaningful human interactions for the development of a healthy self-concept. The awareness phase (K-3) of the career development model presented on the following page is intended to illustrate this concern. The most important part of the learning process is the involvement that is created between the student and teacher and student and peers. There are many studies which reveal a high correlation between the child's self-percept and the way in which the child is perceived by teachers. The teacher must become personally involved with each child. Only then can he or she think, feel and experience some of what the learner is experiencing. The teacher is a significant other, one of those people who matters a great deal to the student. In the awareness state, the learner is supersensitive to feedback from the teacher. It is important to note that even when the teacher is helping someone with the process of ego self-mastery, what is being done may prove to be a threatening stance toward some other student. Comparisons are particularly dangerous in this regard.

Human warmth and acceptance need to be stressed as the essential ingredients in the learning environment. When students experience success in achieving goals and objectives set before them, they establish a foundation upon which to master more complex relationships and more difficult tasks. The atmosphere will be challenging and provide room for personal growth without threatening a learner. A threatening environment is one which causes a student to lose face, is humiliating, or deprives a student of basic needs. In the awareness phase of career development, students are involved in defining themselves and the roles played by other people with whom they associate. It is desirable that they have experiences which will help them develop healthy, growth-oriented, open, honest relationships with those with whom they come in contact. It is up to the institution to provide many opportunities for the child to interact with his or her peers.

The media generation in which children are presently involved provides many potential learning experiences. However, if parents and teachers do not intervene children may be deprived of the opportunity to play together and formulate sound approches for human involvement. Man is a social animal and education is remiss if it does not provide situations where students working together can learn to define who they are and how to solve their problems.

The learning situation too often deteriorates into a condition where the teacher, through the power of personality, forces students to give up

their identities in order to perform in the prescribed manner. Security needs are more basic to children at this point than is the desire to self-actualize. Children will surrender their identity rather than place themselves in the position of losing the recognition that they need. Maslow contends that growth can only take place in the learner at the stage where the next step forward is personally more delightful than the anxieties produced by the novelty of the new experience.

Self-concept in the Accommodation Phase of the Career Development Process

Many of the factors identified as being important for the child's healthy self-concept in the awareness stage carry over into other stages of development. The need for parental love, trust, and acceptance of one's uniqueness by teachers and significant others continues. [Two areas of concern which receive more stress during the accommodation phase than in preceding phases are (1) the child's concern about what peers think of him or her, and (2) the child's breakdown in egocentric behavior and resultant concern with cooperative behavior.]

The individual's self-image in the accommodation stage of career development is affected by how that person assesses the feedback received from peers. This is a period in which certain physical skills are highly prized. The ability to catch, kick, and throw a ball are all important to the child. There needs to be a stress on learning activities which aid the child in the coordination of large muscles. The child will find that peers will withhold or grant recognition on how well these feats are performed. The peer expectation for girls are not always as extreme as those for boys in regard to these physical skills. The curriculum needs to take into consideration the extreme differences in ability and physical maturation which can exist at this age. The need for situations where students can learn these skills in a noncompetitive environment is obvious.

Piaget uses the term "concrete" when identifying the type of middle childhood experiences which are needed. It is important that experiences provided by the educational community be as real as possible.

Teachers providing learning experiences with which they have personally not been involved can create mental constructs which give the child a false frame of reference. For example, if a teacher from an urban background is teaching about life on a farm, why take the chance of creating false impressions if it is possible to personally visit a farm?

The accommodation phase is also one in which students should begin to learn to work effectively with their peers. Piaget identifies the "morality of cooperation" as being one of the crucial objectives for middle childhood. The child should learn how to get along with children of the same age. One educational objective should be to structure

learning situations so that they involve students working with each other. Research shows that students learn best from other students. In most schools it would not be too difficult to create a structure where students tutor each other. This could be handled both within a class and between students of different ages.

Another concern of the teacher which should lend itself to group work at this level of career development is the whole question of moral behavior. The student needs to be presented with moral problems and then encouraged to come up with meaningful solutions. Small group discussions and problem-solving techniques represent a good mode for attacking these kinds of problems.

The accommodation phase represents a unique challenge to the educational process, because it represents the moving-out of the individual from areas of fairly personal and local concern to a more meaningful involvement with other students in a broader social context.

Self-concept in the Exploration Phase

The exploration phase of career development represents a radical change for each individual in the ways in which a person assesses self-identity. Peer influence remains quite important, but sexual awareness changes the interpersonal orientations. It represents a very challenging period in an individual's life. There is a great deal of variability in interests, maturation, and abilities of children in the exploration stage.

The middle years present the student with the task of learning how to get along with children of the same age. In the exploration stage this process continues with a new emphasis, learning to interact with students of the opposite sex. It is incumbent upon the school that children be provided with opportunities to help understand their own sexuality, and also to better comprehend the sexuality of people of the opposite sex. It is important in small group work, class discussions, and physical education activities that children get the opportunity to learn to relate to members of the opposite sex in an informal environment.

The school should provide learning experiences where students have an opportunity to think through or work through the sex roles in our society. It is important that girls and boys be confronted with successful role models. Part of the exploration process should examine the expanding role of women in American society with an attempt to work with women who have been successful in business, sports, public service and other areas. A real attempt needs to be made to insure that children are not confronted with stereotypic situations. The portrayal of men in warm, human, sensitive roles (male nurse) needs to be encouraged. Girls need to be able to see the myriad of possibilities open to them besides the roles of housewife, mother, secretary, nurse and/or teacher.

The career exploration concept is an important part of a child's self-concept formation. In earlier societies where an individual's career choice was dictated by existing realities, the individual had the assurance of knowing what one's future life was to be like. In our culture where the involvement of young people in the adult world has not been well developed and where the problem of career possibilities are so complex, a void has been created by the inability of educators, and parents, to find adequate supplements for occupational experiences as they affect identity formation. The process of exploration will aid the learner in the formation of constructs which will help to facilitate the individual's role in personal career development.

Another area of interest to the educator should be that of creating a learning environment which allows the student to attain involvement in solving or working on real social problems. There are several approaches to solving these problems. One such solution is to involve students in political and social processes which will be carried on in an atmosphere respective of democratic ideals and individual interests. Another solution could be that of the school working with other social agencies to provide experiences where the learner can be involved in working to help other people. Experiences such as candy stripe programs where school kids work in hospitals, read to people in old-age homes, help older persons fix up their yards and paint their houses should be considered.

The most important thing to keep in mind about junior high learners is the tremendous variability in their maturation and development. These students are reaching out for a larger involvement than they had previously. They need the stability and support that parents and teachers provide while at the same time they need opportunities to explore new areas of personal intrigue and growth. Expert guidance and advice on career awareness, sex, courtship, marriage, family relationships, and social involvement are needed.

Preparation - Exploration Phase and the Self-concept

The process just defined for the exploration phase as it relates to a person's self-concept continues to develop in the preparation and exploration phase of career development. Career exploration, examination of sexual roles, examination of marriage and parental roles, and background in home management remain important.

Occupational choice is a major concern of students in our society. In most less-complex societies and in earlier periods in our own society, young people were involved in carrying out aspects of adult roles. They had the necessary concrete personal experiences to make realistic decisions concerning career possibilities. Today the need for good exploratory

training, work study and other cooperative programs, and vocational guidance is evident to help fill this culturally and economically induced void. The separation between work/career oriented community experiences and school provided experiences needs to be broken down.

The career orientation of an individual and a person's self-concept development are two mutually dependent concepts in the preparation and exploration phase. At this point the individual who has attained an understanding of self-identity and how it fits into the career decision-making process will find that an orderly approach to career planning will enhance one's ability to make the transition from that of a minor to adulthood more meaningful.

Generalizations

1. When one is treated as if one is ugly, unwanted, unloved, mean, stupid by people who are important to that person (significant others), one will probably develop a negative self-concept.

2. The first years of a child's life are the most important for the development of a child's self-concept, but a person's self-concept is an ever changing one.

3. As a person with a healthy self-concept matures, that individual becomes less open to manipulation by other people.

4. Where children can experience success they will normally illustrate adequate ego mastery.

5. A boy or girl needs to be accepted as he or she is in order to develop a healthy self-concept.

6. The most damaging thing that can happen to a child in our society is to be ignored. Even negative feedback reinforces the fact that the child exists and is worthy of attention.

7. Evaluation of student achievement has to be individualized in a positive way. The student should be able to say, "I am making progress," as opposed to, "I'm still failing."

8. Adults must be willing to become involved with students. Only then can the child stop being defensive and let the real self show through.

9. If you want a child to feel good about self, you have to respect the child.

10. Statements which are destructive to a child's status will negatively affect the child's sense of self-worth.

11. Overprotection and dominance by teachers and parents can be just as destructive to a child's self-concept as neglect.

12. By doing things for a child that the child can do alone we may imply that the child is a failure.

13. Discipline should involve a process of helping one learn to solve one's own problem.

14. It is not enough to tell a child that he or she is worthy, it must be reinforced through trust, respect and understanding.

15. Teaching techniques which involve group interaction are important not only because they might be more effective in teaching knowledge, but because they help students learn to work cooperatively with other people.

16. The acquisition of knowledge and self-concept formation are not two separate processes. The attitudes, values, and other components of our identity affect our involvement in any learning process.

17. Language usage is important as a basis for self-concept formation. Class status affects the language development of a child. Ability grouping based on the ability to manipulate words can easily become a class-conscious tracking mechanism reinforcing identity problems which students from lower class homes may already know.

18. It is important that students be supplied with concrete experiences on which they can formulate basic constructs for thinking.

19. Adolescents need to be involved in adult roles. The transition from school to the environment external to it is most difficult if the curriculum has maintained this dichotomy.

20. The school has to make a conscious effort to combat sex role stereotyping. Students should have the opportunity to observe men and women successfully involved in nontraditional roles.

21. Situations which overwhelm an individual in terms of that person's existing capabilities can create extreme anxiety and frustration.

22. The child learns best when free to explore without threat to self-percept, as opposed to a high anxiety situation.

23. Body Cathexis, the satisfaction or dissatisfaction an individual has because of physique, greatly influences a person's self-concept.

24. A change in the learner's self-concept is a part of every learning situation.

25. A successful teacher has learned to use his or her own self-concept to create meaningful involvement with students.

26. A good self-concept is based on the ability to solve problems, not to escape from them.

27. Personal satisfaction is based on learning how to fill one's own needs.

28. The way a child behaves because of being involved in a given learning environment depends on how he or she relates to the experience provided.

29. Failure and success are personal experiences. If a child feels he or she is a failure, it will make little difference how the child's parents or teachers feel.

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